

World Press Trends: Newspaper audience up, but digital revenues...

PARIS, FRANCE / DARMSTADT, GERMANY: More people read newspapers than ever before, thanks to the many ways they now can be read, but publishers have not yet found ways to match that growth with revenues from digital platforms, the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA) said Monday in its annual update of World Press Trends.



According to the data, more than half the world's adult population read a newspaper: more than 2.5 billion in print and more than 600 million in digital form. That represents more readers and users than total global users of the internet.

"The facts are hard to dismiss: newspapers are pervasive, they are part of the fabric of our societies. Our industry is stronger than many imagine," said Larry Kilman, deputy CEO of WAN-IFRA, who presented the figures Monday at the annual World Newspaper Congress and World Editors Forum, the global summit meetings of the world's press.

"At the same time, newspapers are changing, and must change, if they are to continue fulfilling their traditional role as watchdog, and as the provider of credible news and information that citizens need to make informed decisions in society. The problem is not one of audience. We have the audience. The challenge is largely one of business, of finding successful business models for the digital age."

Newspaper print circulations continue to rise strongly in Asia and the Middle East, offsetting declines in print circulation in Europe, North America and Latin America. Global circulation increased by 1.1% between 2010 and 2011, according to the World Press Trends update.

Ad revenues declining

At the same time, newspaper advertising revenues have been declining as revenues lost in print have not been replaced by digital advertising. The study found that this decline correlates with a lack of "intensity" when it comes to digital news reading - digital news consumers spend less time and visit fewer pages on digital platforms than they do in print. This lack of intensity is reflected in newspapers' share of digital revenues.

Newspapers in many markets are taking steps to correct this by finding ways to increase usage online. "This is an area where publishers can lay the groundwork for increasing revenues from digital - finding ways to increase the intensity of the

user experience is at the base of increasing revenues," Kilman said.

WAN-IFRA's World Press Trends survey is reputed to be the largest of its kind, containing circulation data from more than 150 countries and advertising revenues from more than 90 countries, representing more than 90% of global industry turnover.

WAN-IFRA, which has published the World Press Trends survey annually since 1989, marked a new era on Monday with the launch of the World Press Trends database to replace the familiar statistical compendium. The database includes the data found in the printed report plus updates to reflect the growing importance of digital. It allows for custom report generation and printing. Full details can be found at <http://www.wan-ifra.org/wpt>

The 2012 World Press Trends update found:

Audience

- More than 2.5 billion people read newspapers in print at least once a week and 600 million read newspapers online. Of those online readers, 500 million read both print and online and 100 million access newspapers in their digital version only.
- More than 40% of the world's digital audience read a newspaper online, up from 34% a year ago. However, while newspaper websites attract massive numbers of people to their websites, a major challenge remains frequency and intensity of the visits. While nearly 7 in 10 internet users in the United States visit newspaper websites, only 17% visit daily.
- Newspaper paid-for circulation increased by 1.1% globally in 2011 compared with 2010, to 512 million.
- The global newspaper audience has grown by 4.2% since 2007.
- Free newspapers continue to be a factor in many markets, despite some retrenchment, and saw global distribution of 36 million in 2011. Free newspapers are popular with young readers, generate equivalent reader per copy levels as paid for newspapers and have similar advertising yields.
- Asia now accounts for a third of global circulation and has seen circulations grow by 16% over five years, while those in Western Europe and North America have declined by 17% during the same period.
- Newspaper circulation grew 3.5% in Asia year-on-year, and 4.8% in the Middle East and North Africa. It fell 3.4 % in Europe, 3.3% in Latin America, and 4.3% in North America. Circulation in Australasia was stable.
- Scandinavian and Alpine countries continue to have the highest readership of newspapers per capita, with South Korea and Hong Kong rising to top-10 positions. The top countries for newspaper readership are also among the countries with the highest broadband penetration rates.

Revenues

- Print continues to provide the vast majority of newspaper company revenues, with circulation alone accounting for nearly half of all revenues. Newspapers are a 200 billion dollar annual industry.
- Newspaper advertising revenue totalled US\$76bn in 2011 - 20% of the overall ad market - down from US\$128bn in 2007. North America accounts for 72% of the decline in the value of newspaper advertising worldwide. Advertising declines in Western European newspapers have eased in recent years.
- Overall digital advertising market rose from US\$42bn to US\$76bn from 2007 to 2011. Only 2.2% of total newspaper advertising revenues in 2011 came from digital platforms.
- Advertising market shares vary greatly from region to region, with television dominating Latin America and Eastern European markets and press strong in the Middle East and Western Europe.
- Search advertising accounts for 58% of all digital advertising and 13% of all advertising expenditure.

New platforms

- Less than three years after the launch of the i-Pad, tablets and e-readers are proving to be a promising platform for news consumers. Six in 10 tablet users say their tablets replace what they used to get from a newspaper or magazine.
- More than half of tablet owners say they consume news on their tablet daily, and 30% say they spend more time with news than they did before purchasing the tablet. A majority say they prefer the tablets over traditional computers, print publications or television.

World Press Trends database

The new World Press Trends database will be familiar to anyone who has used the printed version. It includes the data found in the printed report - country by country and aggregated data and trends on circulation and readership, advertising revenues, digital publishing and much more.

The database includes the country reports and global aggregate tables that were contained in the printed publication, but it also allows users to generate custom reports. Users can choose from a large number of criteria - for example, a comparison of circulation and advertising revenues among selected countries - to produce reports that meet their own specific needs. These can be downloaded in Excel to enable in-depth analysis, benchmarks and historic trends.

Members of WAN-IFRA will continue to receive a World Press Trends Executive Summary without charge, which contains the data that is most often consulted.

For those who need access to additional data, WAN-IFRA is offering the database to both members and non-members by individual access, on an annual edition basis, and IP access that allows companies, universities or libraries to provide access to any number of users. Full details can be found at <http://www.wan-ifra.org/wpt>

The database currently includes 2006 to 2011 data from 76 countries, with more countries being added regularly.

A comprehensive overview

World Press Trends can tell you how many newspaper titles are published world-wide. Which daily newspaper has the largest circulation in the world? Which country has the biggest number of top 100 dailies by circulation?

It can tell you the top 20 free dailies world-wide; the number of titles and circulation by countries, or aggregated world-wide; newspaper reach, readership and media consumption trends: online editions and online readership; top newspaper advertisers and advertising categories; cover prices; advertising expenditures and revenues; market share of newspapers and other media; and much more.

Among other areas, researchers can use World Press Trends to determine how media consumption is shifting in different markets; economic developments; newspaper circulation and number of titles; newspaper revenue; and internet and mobile trends.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>